ABSTRACT

REVISITING FRANTZ FANON IN THE ERA OF GLOBALIZATION

by Beatrice O. Omwomo

This work seeks to investigate the significance and relevance of Frantz Fanon’s colonial and postcolonial ideas about Africa in the era of contemporary globalization, based on *Les damnés de la terre* and *Peau noire, masques blancs*. It provides a brief overview of colonialism and globalization in an attempt to show the connection between the power structures of the two. It further discusses the present manifestations of Fanon’s thoughts on nationalism and the issue of representation. The main argument of this work is that there are similarities between Fanon’s theory of colonial Manichaeism that sustained oppression of the Other, and contemporary discriminatory practices in globalization processes. By way of conclusion this work suggests that Fanon’s thoughts about humanity as well as his call for a new way of thinking offers an opportunity for discussing ways of addressing today’s global inequalities.
REVISITING FRANTZ FANON IN THE ERA OF GLOBALIZATION

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INTRODUCTION

Frantz Fanon, a Martiniquais writer and psychiatrist born in 1925, explains his analysis of race, class and sexuality in his book *Peau noire, masques blancs* using this often cited statement, from the conclusion of his first book:

Moi, l’homme de couleur, je ne veux qu’une chose : Que jamais l’instrument ne domine l’homme : Que cesse à jamais l’asservissement de l’homme par l’homme. C’est-à-dire de moi par un autre. Qu’il me soit permis de découvrir et de vouloir l’homme, où il se trouve. Le nègre n’est pas. Pas plus que le blanc.

(*Peau noire* 187)

I consider Fanon’s stance seminal for the beginning of this work for it stresses his great respect and value for humanity, an issue that needs to be constantly in our minds as globalization progresses. Fanon’s call for universalism and egalitarianism is framed within the anti-colonial context of racial injustice but also relates to some contemporary global social and economic gaps, forms of domination, alienation, marginalization and exclusion of people both at the national and international levels. Fanon’s focus, as revealed by his major works, *Peau noire, masques blancs* (1952), *Les damnés de la terre* (1961) and *Pour la révolution africaine* (1964), was the struggle against colonialism, a system that he criticizes as oppressive and dehumanizing. He advocates for justice and equality of men of all races. Fanon concludes that “Le nègre n’est pas. Pas plus que le blanc.” His universal perspective on humanity and equality of human beings extends beyond the superficial aspects of man, that is, his race. Fanon places enormous value on what lies behind the outward appearance of man, that is, the human substance of man and his real identity. Fanon is a dialectical thinker who believes that the colonized can resist and transcend racism by creating a “new humanism.” As Nigel Gibson puts it in *Fanon the Postcolonial Imagination*: “By embracing the reaction to the White construction of the Black … Fanon believes he can get beyond it. Though the reaction to the Other’s construction remains within the ground of the first, that is it is a reactive action, Fanon believes that it can produce a new moment of self knowledge and therefore the possibility of exploding Manicheanism” (30-31). Fanon’s legacy lies in his call for self-consciousness, his hope for humanity and his resolve to help in the liberation of man from oppression regardless of race.

To Fanon, human rights are paramount. As the world experiences changes that come with globalization, substantial progress is being made by human rights agencies who act as watchdog
groups to ensure that human rights are protected. It is also true that there has been great progress in terms of development in Third World countries since Fanon’s era. However, effort is still needed in order to redress socioeconomic inequalities between the developed world and their counterparts in Third World countries. In this sense, the quest for total liberation in formerly colonized countries remains a work in progress. Fanon’s main focus is to address the effects of colonization. Colonization was a different phenomenon from globalization in many ways, but it would be worth revisiting Fanon’s appeal for the most basic human rights – freedom of association, freedom of movement and equality at a time when the world economy, cultures and identities are defined as transnational. Today, different modes of exclusion are founded on markers such as national identity and cultural differences. Fanon is also worth rereading at a time when the countries that became sovereign after gaining independence are still too poor and ill-equipped to carry out their sovereign duties sufficiently and still have to rely on developed countries for both financial and policy matters. One could say that North–South relations are still marked by the same ambivalence and unevenness that characterized them during the era of colonization.

Fanon, like Jean-Jacques Rousseau, acknowledges that the genesis of inequality among the human race was economic deprivation:

Il demeure toutefois évident que pour nous la véritable désaliénation du Noir implique une prise de conscience abrupte des réalités économiques et sociales. S’il y a complexe d’infériorité, c’est à la suite d’un double processus:

- économique d’abord;
- par intériorisation ou, mieux, épidermisation de cette infériorité, ensuite.

(Peau noire 8)

Rousseau shares this view in his Discourse on the Origin of the Inequality. 1 He argues that once man acquired wealth, it became possible for man to enslave another. Then, man realized that he needed to protect his property, which in turn led to the need for a system of law and order:

Such was, or may well have been, the origin of society and law, which bound new fetters on the poor, and gave new powers to the rich; which irretrievably destroyed natural liberty, eternally fixed the law of property and inequality, converted clever usurpation into unalterable right, and, for the advantage of a few

1. Translated and rendered into hypertext by Jon Roland of The Constitution Society.
ambitious individuals, subjected all mankind to perpetual labour, slavery and wretchedness.

Fanon’s idea can also be traced to Marxist thought as stated by Mary Klages: “Marxists want to analyze social relations in order to change them, in order to alter what they see as gross injustices and inequalities created by capitalistic economic relations” (126). Because one’s economic status constitutes a significant element in the formation of one’s image, economic matters are key when putting in place an effective system that upholds human dignity. Fanon’s principal argument in both his Peau noire, masques blancs and Les damnés de la terre is that economic deprivation is the root cause of disempowerment of the black man and that it puts him in a situation of permanent desire of the Other. Fanon states: “Le regard que le colonisé jette sur la ville du colon est un regard de luxure, un regard d’envie” (Les damnés 70, my emphasis). Fanon’s stress on the negative psychological impact of economic deprivation on the colonized may not be seen as relevant in the contemporary global times since proponents of globalization maintain that it promotes economic development and reduces the gap between the poor and the rich by raising the income of the former. Nevertheless, Fanon’s psychological factor of economic powerlessness manifests itself in the form of the dependency syndrome that widely characterizes formerly colonized African countries. Many have argued that developed countries exploit the underdeveloped and in fact stifle their economic advancement in order to “keep them subaltern” (Schwarz and Ray 141). In Les damnés de la terre, Fanon critiques the national bourgeoisie and postcolonial leadership for enabling the dependence of the “independent” nation on European countries. He writes: “La bourgeoisie nationale se découvre la mission historique de servir d’intermédiaire” (Les damnés 193, my emphasis).

Fanon is clear in his appeal for freedom of association and movement: “Qu’il me soit permis de découvrir et de vouloir l’homme, où il se trouve” (Peau noire 187). This is a timely call when global mobility continues to escalate and when immigrants of today have become the Others of the nations where they choose to live and work. In his discussion of ethnicity and globalization, Stephen Castles observes: “The migrant has always been the “Other” of the nation. National identity is often asserted through a process of exclusion – feelings of belonging depend on being able to say who does not belong” (187). Although the new global order necessitates free movement of people across nations, immigrants are still confronted by the binary system that was typical of colonialism. This is replayed in the form of ‘citizen’ versus ‘immigrant’ and
‘dominant’ versus ‘minority’ group paradigms, with dominant groups having rights to certain benefits such as employment, education and health that are denied to the Others. Hence, subalternity persists in the era of globalization as people and nations are either included or excluded from certain groups. It is at this point that colonialism and globalization intersect.

Many have argued that globalization has nothing to do with colonialism. However, some questions arise. Does globalization replay some master-servant paradigms that defined colonialism? In my view, yes. Is it fair to all the participants? My answer is a definite no. Although the traditional white versus black construction that set the stage for justification of domination and economic exploitation in the era of European colonialism might not characterize the era of globalization, racism has continued to mutate and to manifest itself in the form of discriminatory practices used by developed countries in their political, economic and social relations with developing countries. The targets of racism are formerly colonized African countries or the underdeveloped world. Exclusion of these Others is also reflected in groups like the G8 and the G20, and in the representation of Third World countries in institutions like the IMF. The issue of representation of the Other for power in the “globalizing” world calls to mind the questions raised by postcolonial theorists like Gayatri Spivak: Can the Subaltern Speak? (cited in Williams and Chrisman 66) and Edward Said’s Orientalism project that claimed that knowledge about the Orient as expressed by Europe was an ideology to bolster colonial power. Said states that:

The relationship between the Occident and the Orient is a relationship of power, of domination, of varying degrees of a complex hegemony … The Orient was Orientalized not only because it was discovered to be ‘Oriental’ in all those ways considered commonplace by an average nineteenth-century European, but also because it could be – that is, submitted into being – made Oriental. There is very little consent to be found, for example, in the fact that Flaubert’s encounter with an Egyptian courtesan produced a widely influential model of the Oriental woman; she never spoke of herself, she never represented her emotions, presence or history. He spoke for her and represented her. He was foreign, comparatively wealthy, male, and these were historical facts of domination that allowed him not only to possess Kuchuk Hanem physically but to speak for her and tell his readers in what way she was “typically oriental.” (cited in Williams and Chrisman 133)
Hence, developed countries continue hegemonic practices by “speaking for” and “speaking about” developing countries in economic, cultural and political matters. According to Homi Bhabha, the industrialized countries “speak for” developing countries in search of “solutions to inequality and poverty subscribed to by the IMF and the World Bank.” Quoting Joseph Stiglitz, a renowned American economist, Bhabha argues, in a foreword to Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth*, that this has “the feeling of the colonial ruler” (xii). Thus the debate of Self versus Other has been reprised in the global age, and Fanon’s voice that spoke for the oppressed and to the oppressors is still relevant in the contemporary world.

In the foreword of *The Wretched of the Earth*, Bhabha seeks to extend the lifespan of Fanon’s ideas arguing that although the era of globalization has been to a certain extent beneficial to Third World countries, the ghost of colonialism still haunts their relation with the First World. Bhabha reiterates that the economic and political structures that bolster globalization are the cause of global duality that recalls the era of colonialism:

> The landscape of opportunity and “choice” has certainly widened in scope, but the colonial shadow falls across the successes of globalization. Dual economies create divided worlds in which uneven and unequal conditions of development can often mask the ubiquitous, underlying factors of persistent poverty and malnutrition, caste and racial injustice, the hidden injuries of class, the exploitation of women’s labor, and the victimization of minorities and refugees. (xii)

Here, although Bhabha acknowledges that globalization has opened doors to Third World countries in terms of access to development, he criticizes the models of development that come with globalization. He argues that these models camouflage the realities faced by the poor countries, and Bhabha is skeptical about the choices available to Third World countries. His contention is that the colonial experience still lingers. Fanon’s criticism hints at a subtle form of the “monde compartimenté” (*Les damnés* 41) that he describes in *Les damnés de la terre*.

While globalization and neo-liberal ideas have extended to the remotest parts of the world, it is important to note that their impact has also been felt in some regions of the developed world. However, my intention is to focus on the relevance of Fanon’s ideas in the North-South relations with an emphasis on formerly colonized African countries. I will seek to explore these ideas within a historical, social and political framework. Formerly colonized countries continue to be plagued by historical exploitation and the ever-growing injustices of global institutions of
power. This situation is akin to the history of colonialism. In my study of Fanon, I will reexamine colonial and postcolonial perspectives on domination and resistance that centered on the interconnectedness between races, class and power. Although my study broadly refers to Fanon’s major works, I will concentrate and present most citations from the first two chapters of *Les damnés de la terre*, due to their crucial pertinence to the exploration of the links between colonialism and globalization and to the goal of this thesis. Moreover, it is difficult to understand the inequalities and domination patterns in African countries without explaining their leadership, a subject that Fanon dwells on in “De la violence.” Fanon’s views on the colonial and postcolonial situation help us understand the current power patterns.

In the course of this discussion, I will examine whether Fanon's criticism of the structure of power relations, specifically the Manichaean system in both colonial and postcolonial Africa, applies in contemporary world at a time when the new global order has radically changed the power structures. What parallels can we draw from Fanon’s views on the inequalities and domination patterns between the colonial period and the era of globalization? What are the differences? Are there lessons about politics and governance that the Third World countries in the twenty-first century can learn from Fanon’s writings?
I: FROM COLONIALISM TO GLOBALIZATION

In this chapter I will explore the concept and the history of the terms ‘colonialism’ and ‘globalization’ in relation to contemporary Western domination mechanisms in Africa and other formerly colonized nations. I will draw parallels between colonialism and "post-colonial" (globalization) eras, and I will show that both concepts are driven by imperialistic motives. In my view, colonialism in Africa was merely replaced by a different form of control. As such, ‘postcolonial’ with reference to Africa means the next level of colonialism, that is neo-colonialism. I argue for the continued relevance of Fanon’s analysis of economic and power relations between the North and the Third World countries.

Definition of terms

Colonialism

Colonialism in Africa reached its peak in the late nineteenth century during the “Scramble for Africa” when European and British powers met at the Berlin Conference to share Africa for the purpose of her occupation, annexation and exploitation of her economic resources. Barbara Harlow, in her contribution, “Conference of Berlin (1884-1885)” in Melvin Page’s book Colonialism, explains: “The Berlin Conference brought rival European diplomats to the table to make orderly treaty determinations, but it was occasioned by—and laid the grounds for—what has become known as the rather more disorderly “scramble for Africa.”” This marked the historical encounter between Europe and Africa in terms of economics, politics, culture, as well as matters concerning identities. Aimé Césaire, Frantz Fanon and Edward Said are notable among the most celebrated colonial and postcolonial critics of the twentieth century. Fanon was an anti-colonial revolutionary who focused mainly on black identity, nationalism and its pitfalls, and domination and resistance. Fanon also acknowledged that economic reality was paramount in the analysis of the black man’s alienation. Yet, the discourse of colonialism in Africa would be incomplete without the mention of Aimé Césaire and his Discours sur le colonialisme, to whom Fanon pays homage in his introduction to Peau noire, masques blancs.

2. Edward Said developed the idea of Orientalism (1978) in the work by the same title, his most influential work that unravels the power relationships between the Occident and the Orient. Said used the word ‘orientalism’ to refer to discourse that created knowledge from the ‘Occident’s (western culture) point of view, about the ‘Orient’ (the colonized culture).
What is colonialism? The word colonialism refers to any practice characteristic of a colony. To define colonialism, it will be necessary to examine the meaning of ‘colony.’ According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, the term colony in its modern usage means:

A settlement in a new country; a body of people who settle in a new locality, forming a community subject to or connected with their parent state; the community so formed, consisting of the original settlers and their descendants and successors, as long as the connexion [sic] with the parent state is kept up.

The above definition does not in any way suggest that the settlers had control over the new country, neither does it hint at the motive behind the settlers’ relocation. As a matter of fact, the definition places emphasis on settlers’ attachment to and continued relations with their motherland. Many have argued that the primary aim of forming colonies was to settle communities in foreign lands, and not to rule over the natives, a perspective that derives from the above definition.

So far we have examined the term colonialism from the viewpoint of its etymology. ‘Colonialism’ is from (*colony* “the settler”, *al* “pertaining to”, and *ism* “practice”). In that sense, ‘Colonialism’ is the practice of settling in a new country or immigrating. If the motive of *colons* was simply to settle in foreign lands, how did the word “colonialism” acquire its pejorative connotation?

Anna Johnston and Alan Lawson, authors of *Settler Colonies*, tracing the history of European colonies, distinguish two kinds: “colonies of occupation” and “colonies of settlement.” According to the two writers: “In colonies of occupation, military power (or its representatives) subdued majority indigenous populations, and the political regimes that followed imposed and maintained rule over them. Most of the European colonies in Africa, Asia and the Pacific were of this kind …” (Schwarz and Ray 360). Other writers have a more radical view of colonialism. For instance, in *Colonialism/ Postcolonialism*, Ania Loomba describes colonialism as a system of plunder and political tyranny – one that stifled the freedom of the indigenous peoples. She explains that settlers were not motivated solely by the acquisition of living space, but rather by economic gains or political control. Loomba further indicates that intrusion occurred, for the settlers disorganized the indigenous people’s culture:

Colonialism was not an identical process in different parts of the world but everywhere it locked the original inhabitants and the newcomers into the most
complex and traumatic relationships in human history … The process of ‘forming communities’ in the new land necessarily meant un-forming and re-forming the communities that existed there already, and involved a wide range of practices including trade, plunder, negotiation, warfare, genocide, enslavement and rebellions. (7-8)

Fanon and Loomba concur that colonialism constituted dehumanization of humanity. Both of them stress “trauma” and disorganization as the result of colonialism. However, for Fanon colonialism means more than disorganization of a society. According to Fanon, colonialism denies man his essence: it reduces him to a non-being right from his cradle. The colonized are born into a “monde rétréci, semé d’intérdictions” (Les damnés 41), a restrictive world in which they are reduced to “spectateurs écrasés d’inessentialité” (Les damnés 40). Hence for Fanon colonial system also means segregation. Fanon was influenced by his mentor Césaire, who described colonialism as “cultures trampled underfoot, institutions undermined, land confiscated, … and extraordinary possibilities wiped out” (cited by Slater 175).

Fanon’s Peau noire, masques blancs and Les damnés de la terre, based on the socioeconomic and political context created by the French colonial system in Martinique, Algeria and other parts of colonial Africa, describe colonialism as a form of both physical and psychological violence – a dehumanizing experience imposed on the colonized. Fanon writes: “Leur première confrontation s’est déroulée sous le signe de la violence et leur cohabitation – plus précisément l’exploitation du colonisé par le colon – s’est poursuivie à grand renfort de baïonnettes et de canons” (Les damnés 40). Robert Young, in his book Postcolonialism: An Historical Introduction is explicit on this point as he cites Edward Said: “The appropriation of land and space meant that colonialism was therefore, as Said has emphasized, fundamentally an act of geographical violence, a geographical violence employed against indigenous peoples and their land rights” (20).

The above views explain why the term colonialism was used to describe a practice or a system of domination of colonies. If the word colonialism came to be associated with oppression, it is because it was a practice that dehumanized a certain group while elevating another. If colonialism encountered fierce resistance, it is because colonists promoted their own culture while denouncing indigenous cultures as inferior, and imposed their law, language, religion and education on the indigenous groups. Colonialism was often motivated by the logic of economic,
cultural and political expansion. Accordingly, colonialism was often driven by imperialism – the quest for power and superiority over the territory occupied as well as the need for economic gains.

The mention of the term colonialism may seem anachronistic at this age as former colonized nations boast of their “sovereignty” after a long quest for decolonization. Could the term ‘postcolonial’ be more appropriate to describe the situation of formerly colonized countries? Perhaps not. ‘Postcolonial’ has also been an elusive concept to many of its defenders as well as its critics. Although the common understanding of the concept holds that postcolonial refers to the period after the end of colonial rule, some critics have questioned its location in time as well as its validity in terms of its reference to the end of colonial rule. Some argue that colonialism and postcolonial overlap due to the fact that the impact of the former still lingers in contemporary times. A case in point is when Arif Dirlik begins his essay *The Postcolonial aura: Third World Criticism in the Age of Global Capitalism* by raising Ella Shohat’s question “When exactly… does the ‘post-colonial’ begin?” (McClintock, Mufti and Shohat 501). Loomba on her part argues that: “A country may both be postcolonial (in the sense of being formally independent) and neo-colonial (in the sense of remaining economically and/ or culturally dependent) at the same time” (Loomba 12). This resonates with Spivak’s argument that “postcoloniality is a failure of decolonization” (McClintock, Mufti and Shohat 469). However, there are those who argue that postcolonial refers to the period that follows formal decolonization.

In post World War II, spheres of influence were mainly determined by the colonial past of countries, as most colonies maintained their symbiotic relationship with their former colonizers. History had made its mark in shaping the paradigms of world powers. This has raised the question of sovereignty of formerly colonized countries. Half a century ago, Fanon was not far from the reality of Third World conditions today. He questioned the independence of African countries after decolonization. That is why his insight provides a solid basis for understanding the history of colonialism and its vestiges in the new global order. Fanon expressed skepticism about independence: “L’apothéose de l’indépendance se transforme en malédiction de l’indépendance” (*Les damnés* 95). Was Fanon’s call for revolution and liberation in vain? No, his was a prophetic analysis of the independence of colonized countries, an in-depth analysis that went beyond the immediacies of the moment. Is there evidence that can support the fact that
formerly colonized countries are fully independent in the twenty-first century, the era of globalization? Is sovereignty in these countries a mere empty shell? These questions will be central in my investigation of globalization and its mechanisms.

Globalization

Like colonialism, globalization is a multifaceted phenomenon that evades clear definition, but also a highly contested term whose meaning and usage has evolved over the years. For instance, Bartolovich poses: “Does it [globalization] really exist in so dramatic a form as claimed? If so, what are its main aspects? If not, why is something called “globalization” in everyone’s lips? Is it really new?” (Schwarz and Ray 128). These are some of the questions about globalization that remain unsettled.

The word ‘globalization’ is derived from the word ‘global’, that is, “relating to or encompassing the whole of anything or any group of things, categories, etc.; comprehensive, universal, total, overall” or “Of, relating to, or involving the whole world, worldwide; (also in later use) of or relating to the world considered in a planetary context” (OED). Thus, by inference we may define the word ‘globalize’ as the process of making “universal” or better still, “involving the whole world.” Hence, to complete the definition of the word ‘globalization,’ we need to be clear on what is being ‘globalized.’ Is globalization the process of involving the whole world in power sharing and access to equal economic opportunities? Is it the homogenization of cultures and thus identities? Or, is it involving the whole world in common markets and free trade, as neo-liberals would describe it? It could be the globalization of anything. This is what renders the definition of the word ‘globalization’ rather unclear. What augments the vagueness of the definitions of the word ‘global’ is the use of the words ‘encompass’ or ‘involve’ which could be misinterpreted or misunderstood as the act of a certain group simply including another in their circle of operations under circumstances that are not clearly stipulated. Here ‘inclusion’ may mean invitation to a union as an equal, a subordinate or a superior member. The last two scenarios would give rise to unequal relations between the two groups similar to those that were encountered during colonialism. After all, in the case of Africa, this trajectory had already been determined by the history of European colonialism.

But then the term ‘globalization’ became a commonplace term in the 1980s used to refer to increased flow of people, information and technology. Nevertheless, for the purpose of this
thesis, any reference made to the term ‘globalization’ shall denote two definitions. First of all, I consider as key, the definition offered by Stiglitz of globalization as a process that "entails the closer economic integration of the countries of the world through the increased flow of goods and services, capital and even labor" (Making Globalization 4). This description of globalization within the economic realm is important due to its utility in the discourse of power relations between the North and the Third World that is the core of this section. Secondly, I will use the definition by George Ritzer, quoted from the Encyclopedia of Social Theory: “globalization is the worldwide diffusion of practices, expansion of relations across continents, organization of social life on a global scale, and growth of a shared global consciousness” (4). The role of this definition is crucial since globalization is not limited entirely to the economic space – it touches other aspects like politics, culture and identities.

Globalization of Colonialism?

At what point then, do the paths of globalization and colonialism cross? Globalization and colonialism both have their respective semantic fields unique to their historical contexts. In fact, the two seem mutually exclusive. Earlier in this chapter we examined the evolution of colonialism from a settlement-motivated scheme to an imperialistic scheme. We further questioned the end of colonialism as a practice in Third World countries. Similarly, we explored the possible interpretations of the term ‘globalization.’ In this section I intend to discuss the intersections between globalization and colonialism, and I argue that their connection hinges to a great extent on global capitalism, contemporary economic coercion and political control of developing countries by developed countries. I propose that economic forces that drive both processes help perpetuate interaction among countries and peoples around the world. Moreover, it has been widely argued that both these processes generate economic and power inequalities among and within countries that create a world divided into two, euphemistically referred to as the industrialized and the developing worlds. For example, Amartya Sen, a Nobel laureate, argues in an interview with Nermeen Shaikh, author of The Present as History: Critical Perspectives on Contemporary Global Power, that globalization is about inequality of power. He points out that “the inequalities are monumental in the world today both in economic affluence and in political power.” Thus according to Sen, “Any kind of analysis of globalization has to be alive to the fact” (Shaikh 8). Similarly, Slater in his first chapter, For a Post-colonial
*Geopolitics*, argues that contemporary inequalities between North-South relations are a continuation of history. He suggests that “The re-assertion of the significance of North-South relations captures one of the world’s geopolitical continuities.” Referring to globalization, Slater continues, “Thus the world frequently portrayed in terms of flows, speed, turbulence and unpredictability, there is another narrative rooted in the historical continuity – the recurring stories of poverty, inequality and exclusion – a ‘shock of the old’” (3).

One clear distinction between globalization and colonialism is the difference in the modes of political control in both processes. Colonialism was realized through direct control of the colonized, the exploitation, servitude and subjugation of one group of people by another. Globalization; however, paints a different picture that of freedom, of equal participation of members of the “global village,” and of willing players. But is that difference actual? Colonialism was met with overt criticism and resistance that led to the struggle towards decolonization as a way to liberation. It is worth noting that globalization on its part, has faced resistance from groups that seek to denounce its negative aspects – particularly economic globalization. To this end, some people have come together to advocate for economic justice, protection of human rights and development in the developing countries through groups such as Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs) and the *altermondialiste* movement. Although globalization has had its fair share of opposition, its proponents have managed to gain acceptance due to the fact that it has rendered the accessibility and availability of information and technology more widespread. Globalization is commonly conceived as a process that is geared towards transnationalism – towards collapsing of the economic and cultural walls between nations and international communities. Globalization is seen to give impetus to the unification of nations by increasing permeability of borders, which in turn leads to intricate human interactions and identities. In contrast, the era of colonization is well remembered for the promotion of anticolonial nationalism as a way out of the oppressive regime, for the elevation of the nation-state, a space that Mufti and Shohat claim has now become “a terminal for the flows of transnational capital” in the global economy (4). Colonialism was criticized for erecting “walls” that separated humans from each other in terms of class and race. These walls acted as demarcation lines between the “deux camps: le blanc et le noir” (*Peau noire* 6) or the Self and the Other. Loomba observes in her discussion on colonialism: ‘The definition of civilization and barbarism rests on the production of an irreconcilable difference between ‘black’ and ‘white,’”
self and other” (53). The “walls,” according to Fanon, stultified the indigenous people and reduced them to the Other, as he argues in his essay “Guerre coloniale et troubles mentaux”: “Parce qu’il est une négation systématisée de l’autre, une décision forcenée de refuser à l’autre tout attribut d’humanité, le colonialisme accule le peuple dominé à se poser constamment la question: «Qui suis-je en réalité»?” (Les damnés 240). Nonetheless, on the economic front, colonialism opened borders as raw materials and finished goods were shipped between the colonies and the metropolis. However, discriminatory policies still rule the economic domain. In an interview with Shaikh, Stiglitz explains that the discriminatory practices are employed by the North to help them maintain status quo in the spheres of world power. He emphasizes that:

[I]t is not just that more advanced industrial countries have declined to open up their markets to the goods of the developing countries – for instance, keeping their quotas on a multitude of goods from textiles to sugar – while insisting that those countries open up their markets to goods of the wealthier countries; it is not just that the more advanced industrialized countries continue to subsidize agriculture, making it difficult for developing countries to compete, while insisting that the developing countries eliminate their subsidies on industrial goods. (Shaikh, 54)

Young argues that “Imperialism is characterized by the exercise of power either through direct conquest or (latterly) through political and economic influence that effectively amounts to a similar form of domination: both involve practice of power through facilitating institutions and ideologies” (27). Hence, Young suggests that the point at which the paths of colonialism and globalization intersect is imperialism. Colonialism, as I mentioned earlier in this chapter, was driven by imperialism, in addition, colonialism prepared the ground for what is termed as free market capitalism on which globalization flourishes. The result has been multifaceted; firstly, the creation of a situation where the poor economies, mostly formerly colonized, are dependent on the rich ones that remain at the center of power. Then, there has been the rise of multinational corporations that continue to establish bases in countries where they can exploit resources and channel most of the returns to their countries, further increasing the inequalities between these countries. As such, both in globalization and colonialism there is domination and influence, but in the latter, the practice was formal.

What can we learn about power and globalization by tracing power and colonialism? In order to answer this question, I will discuss Fanon’s theory of colonial power as a tool for
oppression that stirs revolutionary aspirations. But first let us consider Loomba’s analysis of the postcolonial situation. Loomba traces colonialism back to the early civilizations of the Incas and Aztecs in an attempt to prove that colonialism “has been a recurrent widespread feature of human history” (8, my emphasis). Loomba, adds that “if the inequities of colonial rule have not been erased, it is perhaps premature to proclaim the demise of colonialism” (12). Quoting McClintock, Loomba explains:

We cannot dismiss either the importance of formal decolonization or the fact that unequal relations of colonial rule are reinscribed in the contemporary imbalances between ‘first’ and ‘third’ world nations. The new global order does not depend upon direct rule. However, it does allow the economic, cultural and (to varying degrees) political penetration of some countries by others. This makes it debatable whether once-colonised countries can be seen as properly ‘postcolonial’ (Loomba 12)

On the one hand, globalization appears to be a radical departure from colonial power paradigms such as center versus periphery. On the other hand, Marxists have pointed out that the glaring global asymmetries in the era of modern globalization can be attributed to a new form of imperialism inherent in the very process of globalization. For instance Ritzer argues that, “Marxian (and neo-Marxian) theory leads to the view that one of the major driving forces behind globalization is the corporate need in capitalism to show increasing profitability through more, and more far-reaching, economic imperialism” (16). While imperialistic strategy of direct conquest was manifest during European colonization of Africa and Asia, under globalization the developed countries have maintained the status quo of political dominance through other means like encouraging democracy in the developing world. Samir Amin notes:

Today we see the beginnings of a third wave of devastation of the world by imperialist expansion, encouraged by the collapse of the Soviet system and of the regimes of populist nationalism in the Third World. The objectives of dominant capital are still the same—the control of the expansion of markets, the looting of the earth’s natural resources, the superexploitation of the labor reserves in the periphery—although they are being pursued in conditions that are new and in

3. According to Ritzer, globalization focuses on the imperialistic ambitions of nations in order to see their power and influence grow throughout the world.
some respects very different from those that characterized the preceding phase of imperialism. The ideological discourse designed to secure the assent of the peoples of the central Triad (the United States, Western Europe, and Japan) has been refurbished and is now founded on a “duty to intervene” that is supposedly justified by the defense of “democracy,” the “rights of peoples,” and “humanitarianism.” The examples of the double standard are so flagrant that it seems obvious to the Asians and Africans how cynically this language is used.

Western opinion, however, has responded to it with as much enthusiasm as it did to the justifications of earlier phases of imperialism. (Amin, my emphasis)

In the present, promotion of democracy and human rights is the method used to ensure compliance by African states. Emphasis is put on the promise of development as the outcome of democratic governments. While this has undeniably enhanced freedom of expression within the nations in the developing world, it has not granted nations a voice in international spheres where the industrialized countries are still the power wielders. Immanuel Wallerstein deliberates on the effectiveness of democracy prescribed by the developed countries for African and other developing countries and concludes that the North uses it as a lure to maintain their power: “…the concept of democracy became primarily a symbol of, a consequence of, a proof of civilization. The West is democratic; the rest are not … Their hegemony is the basis of progress throughout the world” (162-163). Wallerstein accuses Western leaders of lack of openness.

Fanon also discusses this kind of hypocrisy in capitalist societies. He argues that education and the teaching of morality that he refers to as “formes esthétiques du respect de l’ordre établi” (Les damnés 42) are used as the machinery for ensuring compliance. This resonates with colonial modes of legitimization of power enforced through mission civilisatrice. Fanon’s critique of colonial power instruments is brutally honest. He sees the colonial administration as oppressive and dictatorial:

Aux colonies, l’interlocuteur valable et institutionnel du colonisé, le porte-parole du colon et du régime d’oppression est le gendarme ou le soldat … Dans les régions coloniales … le gendarme et le soldat, par leur présence immédiate, leurs interventions directes et fréquentes, maintiennent le contact avec le colonisé et lui conseillent, à coups de crosse ou de napalm, de ne pas bouger. On le voit, l’intermédiaire du pouvoir utilise un langage de pure violence. L’intermédiaire
n’allège pas l’oppression, ne voile pas la domination. Il les expose, les manifeste avec la bonne conscience des forces de l’ordre. L’intermédiaire porte la violence dans les maisons et dans les cerveaux du colonisé. (Les damnés 41-42)

Here Fanon claims that the colonizer’s power derives from his control of the means of violence that the colonizer equates with law. However, today political structures have undergone so much transformation that oppressive schemes are integrated in the globalization processes and are not visible as Fanon describes above, but the power paradigms that were established in the colonial era continue to bolster power relations that are manifest between the North and the South. Therefore the general apparent consensus that colonialism is a thing of the past needs to be rethought as Young argues here:

To sweep colonialism under the carpet of modernity, however, is too convenient a deflection. To begin with, its history was extraordinary in its global dimension, not only in relation to the comprehensiveness of colonization by the time of the high imperial period in the late nineteenth century, but also because the effect of the globalization of western imperial power was to fuse many societies with different historical traditions into a history which, apart from the period of centrally controlled command economies, obliged them to follow the same general economic path. The entire world now operates within the economic system primarily developed and controlled by the west, in terms of political, economic military and cultural power, that gives this history a continuing significance. Political liberation did not bring economic liberation – and without economic liberation, there can be no political liberation. (Young 5)

Of significance is Fanon’s thought that oppressive power and governance could provide a way of demanding change. Fanon’s motivation for highlighting violence during colonialism was to stage a platform for revolution, to bring about meaningful historical change, to liberate the “wretched” and empower them through decolonization. He analyzed both the immediacies and the future of independence, cautioning against national elites’ possible complicity with former colonizers in domination of the masses (neo-colonialism). For Fanon, decolonization is not simply emerging out of the colonies but the beginning of a process that could bring the colonized to the level of the colonizer, from “la chose” to “l’homme.” He stresses that decolonization "introduit dans l’être un rythme propre, apporté par les nouveaux hommes, un nouveau langage, une nouvelle
humanité” (*Les damnés* 40). Fanon seeks to end the Manichaean structure through decolonization. His insight into the future of Africa, particularly in relation to the contemporary forms of domination like imposition of capitalistic economic and political systems on developing countries, is what makes Fanon a force long after his death. Bhabha argues for the validity of Fanon’s *The Wretched of the Earth* today particularly “because of the peculiarly grounded, historical stance it takes toward the future” (*The Wretched* xiv).

Wallerstein describes globalization as a “historical crisis” and agrees that it is “a moment of transformation.” According to him, globalization is not a new phenomenon but rather a process that can be traced back within two time frames, namely circa 1450 and the end of World War II. The latter period certainly coincides with the peak of decolonization struggles. However, he is quick to point out the vagueness of this transformation:

> But this is not that of an already established newly globalized world with clear rules. Rather we are located in an age of transition, transition not merely of a few backward countries who need to catch up with the spirit of globalization, but a transition in which capitalistic world system will be transformed into something else. The future, far from being inevitable, one to which there is no alternative, is being determined in this transition, which has extremely an uncertain outcome. (45-46, my emphasis)

Wallerstein stresses that globalization is presented as a fatality, the only means to development and to narrow the asymmetry between the North and the Third World countries sometimes referred to as ‘young democracies’. At this point several questions beg for answers: Is there no alternative to globalization as Wallerstein poses? Is it “The End of history?” as Francis Fukuyama asks in his 1989 essay? Fukuyama argues that liberal democracy had triumphed over other forms of governance. He observes: “a remarkable consensus has developed in the world concerning the legitimacy and viability of liberal democracy” and that “Only liberal democracy and market principles of economic organization, constitute developments of ‘truly world historical significance’” (cited in Hall et al. 443). Has the world resigned itself to the fate of globalization without the slightest resistance? While these perspectives rekindle memories of earlier imperialistic regimes, they also take us back to Fanon’s strategy of resistance and of collective consciousness of the oppressed in order to find freedom. It is for this reason that I suggest that although the era of globalization that is characterized by global interconnectedness
has to a certain extent allowed diffusion of power to the people through technology, it has not managed to camouflage the persistence of colonizing practices.
II: FANON: IDEAS AND THOUGHTS

Why read Fanon today?

The interpretations of Fanon’s ideas and thoughts on anti-colonial revolution have been a center of many controversies. For example, Fanon’s critics perceive him as an apologist for violence, particularly in “De la violence,” the first chapter of *Les damnés de la terre*. Yet, as Ato Sekyi-Otu suggests in *Fanon’s Dialectic of Experience*, that is not the case. To Fanon’s detractors, Sekyi-Otu says that Fanon’s “De la violence” should be read with the understanding that the colonial regime, itself run by “un langage de pure violence” (*Les damnés* 42), leaves the colonized “where there is no public space, there is no political relationship, only violence” (87). Thus, as Fanon puts it, the colonizer “porte la violence dans les maisons et les cerveaux du colonisé” (*Les damnés* 42). Violence becomes the only way through which the colonized can express anti-colonial consciousness. Alice Cherki, in her book *Frantz Fanon: A portrait*, denounces Sartre’s foreword to *Les damnés de la terre* for radicalizing Fanon’s discourse on violence. She argues that, “More significantly, he [Sartre] justified violence whereas Fanon had analyzed it and not promoted it as an end in itself but a necessary phase” (181). It is also worth noting that Fanon’s account of the colonial situation was not merely that of a chronicler, but he himself was actively engaged in the making of the history that he wrote; first as a psychiatrist who investigated the psychological impact of colonial violence on Algerians, then as a revolutionary militant in *Front de Libération Nationale* (FLN). He was inspired by his contact with revolutionary fighters in emotional and political distress.  

Although it may be true that some of Fanon’s theories represent his subjective evaluation of the colonial situation, his writings continue to provide insight into the twenty-first century. For instance, Fanon argues that the landless peasants (*paysans sans terre*), who become poor and unemployed rural-urban migrants, are more inclined to revolution because of their spontaneity and discontent with the political and social systems. While these contentions may not reflect the actual happenings in Africa today given the technological and demographic changes that have taken place, dismissing their relevance altogether, in my view, would be missing the point. We have seen the most recent protests in Algeria, Tunisia, Egypt and currently in Côte d’Ivoire and Libya, where the masses are revolting against leadership that thrives on dictatorship, corruption and oppression. The lack

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of leadership that is committed to the well-being and to the concerns of its people, as well as poor economic policies adopted by their leaders are the cause of poverty, unemployment and disease most parts of the Third World. These uprisings attest to Fanon’s views that resistance and self-consciousness turning to collective consciousness can incite revolutionary action on the part of the oppressed.

Fanon’s Theory of National Consciousness

In the previous chapter we discussed Fanon’s relevance to the present manifestations of violence in power relations between formerly colonized countries and the North. In his essay “Mésaventures de la conscience nationale,” Fanon extends his analysis of power relations to include the critique of the national bourgeoisie. Fanon argues that in the post-independence period, the colonizer maintains his power over the “independent” country through the national bourgeoisie, whom he calls the “intermédiaire.” Fanon launches a scathing critique of the native intellectuals’ aspiration for decolonization, citing “son indigence” as the root cause for “la faiblesses classique, quasi-congénitale de la conscience nationale des pays sous-développés” (Les damnés 145-146). He argues that national consciousness, if well channeled, will lead to liberation and to a “new humanism” for countries emerging from colonization. Fanon’s optimism and focus on a new humanism is based on his definition of ‘decolonization’ as a project that “se propose de changer l’ordre du monde … est véritablement création d’hommes nouveaux … est une réussite” (Les damnés 40). Fanon also argues that nationalism is fundamental in unifying people, particularly if they are involved in governance. However, he cautions against national consciousness as conceived by the national bourgeoisie. Let me begin with the passage in which Fanon broaches his discourse on national consciousness:

La conscience nationale au lieu d’être la cristallisation coordonnée des aspirations les plus intimes de l’ensemble du peuple, au lieu d’être le produit immédiat le plus palpable de la mobilisation populaire, ne sera en tout état de cause qu’une forme sans contenu, fragile, grossière. Les failles que l’on y découvre expliquent amplement la facilité avec laquelle, dans les jeunes pays indépendants, on passe de la nation à l’ethnie, de l’état à la tribu. Ce sont ces lézardes qui rendent compte des retours en arrière, si pénibles et si préjudiciables à l’essor national, à l’unité nationale. (Les damnés 145, my emphasis)
Here, a frustrated Fanon juxtaposes his ideal concept of what progressive nationalism ought to be – *cristallisation coordonnée*, *palpable* and a process that should result in *l’unité nationale*, with what it turns out to be – *grossière*, *sans contenu* and *fragile*. Fanon’s argument is grounded in the context of anti-colonial revolution; however, it is important to note that Africa has undergone enormous social as well as political changes since independence. In addition, today’s bourgeoisie class has grown tremendously. These dynamics may raise questions about the validity of Fanon’s theories on nationalism in the present day. Yet, in my view, Fanon’s analysis of national consciousness not only inspires postcolonial theories, but also provides critical issues for analyzing the role of African leaders in contemporary globalization processes. The *failles* (*mésaventures*) in national consciousness that Fanon cautions against are observable in the contemporary context. Contemporary failings of nationalism, which have been intensified by globalization, are manifest both within the local and global spaces in the form of racism, exclusion and economic exploitation. I will first analyze Fanon’s concept of national consciousness in his “Mésaventures de la conscience nationale” in the historical context in which this text was published in 1961. Second, I will examine Fanon’s ideas in the contemporary perspective.

What does Fanon mean by national consciousness? Fanon discusses two forms of nationalism. The first form, antinational nationalism, is inspired by anti-colonial struggle; a force that is driven by the national bourgeoisies’ sole thought: “*remplaçons les étrangers*” (*Les damnés* 154, my emphasis). However, the national bourgeoisie is incapable of being at the helm of the nation after independence. This form of nationalism regresses into oppression of the masses, corruption and dictatorship. Fanon further criticizes the national bourgeoisie for enabling capitalistic relations with former colonizers, which according to him, sustains neocolonialism. The second form of nationalism that Fanon presents stands for an ideology of hope for a new humanity, a national consciousness that promotes genuine liberation, democratic participation in nation building and unity of all.

**Antinational nationalism**

Fanon’s critique of the first form of nationalism hinges on the failures of the national bourgeoisie:
Nous verrons malheureusement que, assez souvent, la bourgeoisie nationale se détourne de cette voie héroïque et positive, féconde et juste, pour s’enfoncer, l’âme en paix, dans la voie horrible, parce que anti-nationale d’une bourgeoisie classique, d’une bourgeoisie bourgeoise, platement, bêtement, cyniquement bourgeoise. (*Les damnés* 147, my emphasis) Fanon attacks the national bourgeoisie for undermining proper decolonization by sustaining neocolonialism after the official end of colonialism. Criticizing the national bourgeoisie’s mission, he asserts that "il ne s’agit pas d’une vocation à transformer la nation, mais prosaïquement à servir de courroie de transmission à un capitalisme acculé au camouflage et qui se pare aujourd’hui du masque néo-colonialiste” (*Les damnés* 148-149, my emphasis). He argues that the national bourgeoisie is “impréparé” and “incapable.” Fanon writes: “Économiquement impuissante, ne pouvant mettre à jour des relations sociales cohérentes” (*Les damnés* 159), the national bourgeoisie is unable to take charge of the nation after independence. Therefore, it is compelled to continue using the colonist’s manual to govern. Fanon asserts, “Elle [la bourgeoisie nationale] suit la bourgeoisie occidentale dans son côté négatif et décadent.” He adds, “Etre dans le circuit, dans la combine, telle semble être sa [de la bourgeoisie nationale] vocation profonde” as it continues with the system of plunder that was the main feature of colonialism (*Les damnés* 146-149). Thus, for Fanon national consciousness as promoted by the bourgeoisie does not liberate the people but instead oppresses them as it repeats colonial rule.

In his essay *Disavowing Decolonization*, Neil Lazarus agrees with Fanon. He asserts that the national bourgeoisie’s goal is “geared toward neocolonial class consolidation…[in order] to constitute themselves as functionaries, straddling the international division of labor between metropolitan capitalism and the subalter classes in the peripheries” (Alessandrini 162). The bourgeoisie thus maintains coercion and domination through dictatorship of a single-party system, using it as a “un moyen de réussite individuelle” (*Les damnés* 165, my emphasis). Fanon however, does not encourage the removal of this caste because he believes that that move would lead to the disintegration of the nation. His message is clear – since the national bourgeoisie has sabotaged the process of decolonization, it needs to be challenged for “à la lettre elle ne sert à rien” (*Les damnés* 168).

Following the thread of individualistic discourse, Fanon sees the national bourgeoisie’s strategic call for anticolonial nationalism as a camouflage of its hypocrisy and selfishness: “Dans
son narcissisme volontariste, la bourgeoisie nationale s’est facilement convaincue qu’elle pouvait avantageusement remplacer la bourgeoisie métropolitaine” (Les damnés 146). The national bourgeoisie’s objective is to fill in the Western bourgeoisie’s professional positions and to take over their land and businesses for their own benefit and privilege, yet “they have nothing to show for themselves” (Cherki 177). According to Fanon, they reduce national consciousness to “une forme sans contenu” that relegates the revolutionary militants to “le titre vide de citoyen,” a non-being, “drained of their essence” and taken back to the process of “thingification” in Césaire’s Marxist terms (197). National bourgeoisie alienates, dehumanizes and offers a hopeless future to its people after using them to “remplir sa propre mission” (Les damnés 164, my emphasis). For Fanon, it is a bourgeoisie that “a merveilleusement aliéné sa propre pensée” (Les damnés 171), a bourgeoisie whose mission is to consolidate its power through corruption and who lack the capacity to lead the people to a genuine liberation in which the people can celebrate social, economic and political independence. Fanon laments:

[…] ces nouveaux colons vont exiger des ouvriers agricoles un travail énorme, au nom bien sûr de l’effort national …Les bénéfices qu’elle [la bourgeoisie] empoche, énormes, …ne sont pas réinvestis. Une épargne de bas de laine domine la psychologie de ces propriétaires fonciers. Quelquefois, surtout dans les années qui suivent l’indépendance, la bourgeoisie n’hésite pas à confier à des banques étrangères les bénéfices qu’elle tire du sol national… Les peuples africains … ont décidé, au nom du continent, de peser de manière radicale sur le régime colonial. Or les bourgeoisies nationales, qui se dépêchent, région après région, de constituer leur propre magot et de mettre en place un système national d’exploitation, multiplient les obstacles à la réalisation de cette “utopie.” (Les damnés 150-159)

Using Etienne Balibar’s categories of “good and bad nationalism,” Castles suggests that “‘Good nationalism’ helps construct a nation-state or provides the focus for a struggle for emancipation of an oppressed group… ‘Bad nationalism’ is one that subjugates other nations and oppresses internal minorities” (169). Here we see a connection between Fanon’s anti-colonial nationalism and Castle’s “good nationalism,” as both forms are geared toward emancipation of the oppressed. In spite of the fact that Castle’s concept of “bad nationalism” focuses on relations of domination within and outside nations, Fanon’s antinational nationalism can still be considered
as “bad nationalism” since it also ultimately leads to domination of people. Thus Fanon and Castles concur that “good nationalism” should lead to liberation of the oppressed people – to a “new humanity.”

**Nationalism for a new humanity**

Françoise Lionnet sums up Fanon’s idea of liberation of the colonized through defensive violence as a reaction to oppression. She shows appreciation of Fanon’s humanism by arguing for its unifying aspect:

> His [Fanon’s] lucid humanism has been a call for an ethics of mutual understanding based on respect for alterity and universal fraternity and solidarity. His views on nationalism stress active participation in a moment of liberation that does not reproduce the Manichaean world of the colonizer but allows individuals to construct freedom through a muscular act of will. (Kritzman 519)

This reading of Fanon thus provides a fitting starting point for examining Fanon’s second form of national consciousness that he passionately discusses. The credibility of Fanon’s commitment to a nationalism that is built around humanism hardly raises any doubt. In fact, in his introduction of *Peau noire, masques blancs*, Fanon declares his mission: “Je crois en toi, Homme …” (*Peau noire* 5).

Fanon believes in a form of nationalism that is capable of building the nation “sur des bases solides et fécondes,” a cause that according to him is derailed by the national bourgeoisie in its pursuit of its own selfish interests, as discussed in the previous section (*Les damnés* 155). To Fanon, a new humanity is not mimicry, nor is it the promotion of Western values, but the realization that people are unique beings who are worthy of dignity. Fanon believes in human dignity as a means of enhancing human essence through national consciousness. He equates consciousness of dignity to esteem. He writes: “Un peuple digne, c’est-à-dire conscient de sa dignité est un peuple qui n’oublie jamais ses évidences (*Les damnés* 188). In his essay “Vers la libération de l’Afrique,” he calls colonialism inexcusable, and specifies as the objective of F.L.N., to: “mettre un terme à l’occupation française, donner les terres aux Algériens, faire une politique de démocratie sociale où l’homme et la femme ont droit également à la culture, au bien-être et à la dignité” (*Pour la Révolution* 122). Fanon’s deep compassion for man goes beyond gender differences; he advocates for the rights of men and women alike.
First, he notes that “l’idéologie bourgeoisie … est proclamation d’une égalité d’essence entre les hommes, se débrouille pour rester logique avec elle-même en invitant les sous-hommes à s’humaniser à travers le type d’humanité occidental qu’elle incarne (Les damnés 158). Therefore, according to Fanon, Western humanity does not represent the archetype of humanity and the colonized subject has to find his own way, his real self. Fanon challenges the notion that dignity is defined in terms of Western rationality as ingrained in the minds of the bourgeoisie and instead alludes to dignity as the empowerment of the people. He sums up the chapter on “Mésaventures de la conscience nationale” by suggesting that leaders and the national government, “doit, avant de se préoccuper de prestige international, redonner dignité à chaque citoyen, meubler les cerveaux, emplir les yeux de choses humaines, développer un panorama humain parce qu’habité par des hommes conscients et souverains” (Les damnés 193, my emphasis). Fanon insists that dignity is a precursor of sovereignty: “En fait, un peuple digne et libre est un peuple souverain. Un peuple digne est un peuple responsable” (Les damnés 188). To him, respect for Self is fundamental in enhancing the sense of respect for the Other. Fanon rejects the idea of racial hierarchy of human beings by refusing the notion of reducing humanity to whiteness. Hence he emphasizes the “respect of alterity,” as Lionnet notes above. In his book The Postcolonial Imagination, Nigel Gibson refers to this form of nationalism as “Fanon’s nationalism”\(^5\) and describes it as:

> implicitly critical of the FLN and other national liberation organizations, and. . . grounded in what he [Fanon] calls a new humanism and internationalism. . . Fanon’s (nationalism\(^3\)) lies not only in [the people’s] their reaction to colonialism but in the people’s perception and consciousness of nationalism. The more the victory over colonialism is seen as the work of people, not some elite, the more it can become decentralized in the postcolonial period. (179 -180)

Gibson adds that “In Gramsci’s pithy hypothesis, nationalism\(^3\) can be thought of as optimism of the will and pessimism of the intellect, a celebration of human action and a critical attention to the hazards of national consciousness” (180). “Critical attention” to the “mésaventures” of national consciousness is precisely what Fanon advocates for.

Fanon warns against national consciousness regressing into tribalism: “partout où cette bourgeoisie nationale s’est révélée incapable de dilater suffisamment sa vision du monde, on

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5. The subscript appears in Gibson’s text to distinguish this particular form of nationalism.
assiste à un reflux vers les positions tribalistes; on assiste, la rage au cœur, au triomphe exacerbé des ethnies” (Les damnés 154). Yet, questions have been raised about his ambitious theory of humanism. Was Fanon’s idea of nationalism for a new humanity merely utopian? David Carroll cites Balibar’s concept of nationalism, asserting that “the idea of nation depends on and is rooted in some form of “fictive ethnicity” rather than being the natural product or reflection of an already unified, homogeneous people, race, religion, or culture.” Like Fanon, Balibar, according to Carroll, is wary of racism as a consequence of nationalism. Carroll concludes, “There is thus for him [Balibar] no nationalism without a problematical, unresolved relation to racism, even if racism cannot be considered the defining element or essence of nationalism” (Kritzman 404). It is important to note that Fanon’s skepticism about nationalism is informed by his deep understanding of Africa; his case study particularly refers to Algeria, whose ethnic composition is as diverse as other African countries’. Fanon’s warnings have come to pass as we have witnessed civil wars ignited by tribalism in some parts of Africa like Rwanda and Sudan.

Fanon is committed to ethical responsibility and insists on a humanity that transcends “Western humanism” that is founded upon “international consciousness.” Michael Azar’s defense of Fanon’s humanism in his essay Fanon and the Algerian Revolution, offers a fitting discussion to conclude Fanon’s idea of nationalism for a new humanity:

Fanon’s humanism must be interpreted in terms of praxis… In Hegelian terms: as the mediation of “abstract negation” inherent in the many attributes to the Manichean logic that Fanon develops in his works: “narcissistic monologue”. . . “systematic de-humanization”. . . The absence of any exhaustive account in Fanon of the state affairs awaiting mankind at the end of this dialectic should not upset us; rather we should be grateful that he refrains from reducing his critical legacy to just one among many other hallucinatory phantasms of an End of History beyond the unforeseeable (imprévisible) possibilities that true human encounters imply. (Alessandrini 31)

After all, for Fanon, the struggle for liberation from oppression would not end with colonialism. In effect, revolution has to be an ongoing process to guard against “mésaventures de la conscience nationale.”

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6. In Les damnés de la terre Fanon offers insights into postcolonial issues in many African countries. He draws his examples from all parts of continent.
Pitfalls of national consciousness in contemporary times

For Fanon, national consciousness is paramount for a democratic Africa; to give a voice to the voiceless and empower the disenfranchised. The issue of nationalism has been contentious now more than ever in Africa, in other developing countries as well as in industrialized countries:

Frantz Fanon’s prescient warnings against the pitfalls of national consciousness were never more urgent than now. For Fanon, nationalism gives vital expression to popular memory and is strategically essential for mobilizing the populace. At the same time, no one was more aware than Fanon of the attendant risks of projecting a fetishist denial of difference onto a conveniently abstracted “collective will.” (McClintock, Mufti and Shohat 110)

Some critics have argued that Fanon raises issues without offering solutions. I will confine my discussion to defenders and detractors who view Fanon’s revolutionary thought as potent in several crucial lessons on rejection of inequalities and oppression not only in Africa, but also the entire globe. In developing this argument, I will attempt to evaluate the relevance of Fanon’s concepts of nationalism and revolution and discuss his theory of nationalism and representation in a contemporary context.

What is Fanon’s intention in emphasizing the “pitfalls” or the “mésaventures” of national consciousness? The response to this question lies within the forms of nationalism that we have discussed above. Fanon wants to protect the human and democratic rights of “les damnés de la terre” and to reject inequalities, corruption and oppression in order to change the world. He writes:

Pendant longtemps le colonisé dirige ses efforts vers la suppression de certaines iniquités : travail force, sanctions corporelles, inégalité des salaires, limitations des droits politiques, etc… Ce combat pour la démocratie contre l’oppression de l’homme va progressivement sortir de la confusion néo-libérale universaliste pour déboucher parfois laborieusement sur la revendication nationale. (Les damnés 145)

Has globalization enabled Africa to reach Fanon’s ideal? Are the poor who Fanon passionately advocates for empowered in the twenty-first century?
Nationalism: Who are the Others of Africa today?

What are the images of Otherness in Africa today? Poverty, hunger, disease, civil wars, to mention a few examples, have relegated many inhabitants of this continent to the inferior Other. In their introduction of *Dangerous Liaisons: Gender, Nation and Postcolonial perspectives*, McClintock, Mufti and Shohat observe that:

In large regions of the Third World, the powerful framework of nationalism, which held such enormous liberationist promise even twenty years ago, has begun to fall apart. In these countries, the slogans of nationalism, its mythos of hearth and home, are now the property of national elites that have been increasingly revealed to be corrupt, capitulationist, undemocratic, patriarchal, and homophobic. (3)

The incapability of the national elite to deliver a successful decolonization is at the center of Fanon’s analysis of the “pitfalls” of national consciousness. Fanon reiterates that post independent leaders are incompetent and lack vision for their countries, a shortcoming that leaves them with no alternative but to follow the governing structures established by the colonists. He states: “Elle se souvient de ce qu’elle a lu dans les manuels occidentaux et imperceptiblement elle se transforme non plus en réplique de l’Europe mais dans sa caricature” (*Les damnés* 168). Fanon knew that Europe’s governing structures would not work for Africa. Time has indeed confirmed Fanon’s fears as poor leadership and inequities still haunt the continent. This situation has further been worsened in the era of globalization. According to Stiglitz, Africa’s woes today are attributable not only to its unpreparedness after independence, but also to its history of colonialism. He notes: "during the early days of independence . . . There was a sense of euphoria, although the countries knew that colonialism had left them ill-prepared for development and democracy. They didn’t even have a modicum of experience in self-governance” (40). Today, the vulnerability of African leaders has forced them to rely to a great extent on the World Bank and the IMF not only for funding, but also for governance policies. This position, as Stiglitz notes, compels these leaders to abide by the “misguided conditions” of loans designed to assist their “structural adjustment.” The result has been the vicious cycle of dependency of these countries on the North, which has also left them vulnerable to subjugation and perpetual financial exploitation. Neil Larsen points out that:
[Fanon’s] account of the transformation of pan-Africanist political leadership in the late 1950s from catalytic into a regressive force that, after independence, “serves to immobilize the people” . . . already anticipates the degeneration of African states into corrupt, neocolonized instruments of IMF and World Bank diktats many have become today. (Schwarz 35)

African leaders have thus continued to sustain domination of their states by the North. The result has been double alienation for the poor in Africa, first locally by their leaders, and then globally by the mechanisms of globalization. In this connection, Anne McClintock writes: “as Fanon predicted, Third World kleptocracies, military oligarchies and warlords have scrambled over each other to plunder the system” (Williams and Chrisman 300).

While the promotion of national consciousness locally is sometimes undermined by ethnic rivalries, at the global level it is occasionally associated with racism. Castles asks: “Is there an automatic link between the encouragement of national feeling as a way of building identity and community, and the development of hatred and contempt for members of national groups?” (169). Wallerstein on his part argues that to invoke nationalism means to exclude members who do not belong to the “imagined community” thus drawing a line between “we” and “them.” He blames the “we-ness” born of nationhood in the era of globalization for the conflicts in many countries around the world. Arguing that “nationalism is not a free-cost good” (144), he cites Japan and China as victims of such conflicts. Fanon too, knew that national consciousness comes with its risks. No wonder that he warned against national consciousness regressing to tribalism and racism. Nonetheless for Fanon it could be a way of unifying people – a way of ending Manichaean patterns.

In this chapter, I examined Fanon’s theory of nationalism. Fanon’s perspective is that nationalism ought to be “la cristallisation coordonnée des aspirations les plus intimes de l’ensemble du peuple” (Les damnés 145) and it should seek to deliver the promise of true nationalism; an all-inclusive nationalism that involves the rural and urban masses alike in governance through democracy. Fanon believes in a nation where the leader and the masses complement each other, where each recognizes the other as a unit of the whole. Hence national consciousness should free the people from oppressive structures and lead to a true and balanced political, social and economic independence. By independence through national consciousness, Fanon means real freedom from foreign control, as well as putting in place a new national policy
that works for all the people, across all ages and regions. He proposes that, “Nous devons soulever le peuple, agrandir le cerveau du peuple, le meubler, le différencier, le rendre humain” (Les damnés 187). With this Fanon sees the advent of much needed social change. Fanon’s view is that meaningful change is possible through “collective consciousness.” People and nations can work towards fostering equitable opportunities for all in order to reduce the asymmetries that result from globalization in the twenty-first century.
III: MANICHAEAN WORLD

Fanon’s conceptualization of Manichaeism during colonization and decolonization is reflected by the titles of his major works, *Peau noire, masques blancs* and *Les damnés de la terre*. In his earlier work, Fanon juxtaposes the white and black races to analyze the colonial situation. Fanon presents a perplexed colonized man who is confronted with an existential identity dilemma in a world divided into two. He uses the metaphor of the white mask to critique the psychological effects of this duality on the colonized. This creates in the mind of the colonized “complexe d’infériorité,” the desire to be white. The presence of the white man is a constant reminder to the colonized of what the colonized lacks; in other words, of his inadequacy. Thus, to compensate for his shortcoming, which is a white construct, the colonized has to wear the white mask, his false self. In Fanon’s words, he has to “exister pour l’autre” to be accepted as human. The white mask denies the colonized his existence, thus his reality. Fanon writes, “Le Noir a deux dimensions. L’une avec son congénère, l’autre avec le Blanc… la conséquence directe de l’aventure colonialiste, nul doute…” (*Peau noire* 13, my emphasis).

According to Fanon, Manichaeism is a product of colonialism. He argues that the colonized develops a strategy of double consciousness in order to cope with his existential dilemma and to function in the colonial setting. However, at the end of his analysis, Fanon seeks reconciliation of the two sides; he calls for open-mindedness, “que l’on sente comme nous la dimension ouverte de toute conscience” (*Peau noire* 188).

In *Les damnés de la terre*, Fanon shifts his focus from the discourse of psychological violence in *Peau noire, masques blancs*, and discusses physical violence as inherent in the colonial system and as a tool that polarizes the colonized and colonizer. However, physical violence also leads to psychological violence. According to Fanon, the colonized is reduced by the oppressive colonial system to a *damné*, *superflu* being. Fanon criticizes colonialism for creating a Manichaean system that fragments humanity, in addition to splitting the human living space into two. Fanon talks of the colonial world as “un monde coupé en deux … deux zones … ce monde compartimenté, ce monde coupe en deux est habité par des espèces différentes … L’espèce dirigeante est d’abord celle qui vient d’ailleurs, celle qui ne ressemble pas aux autochtones, “les autres”” (*Les damnés* 42-43). Fanon describes the Manichaean world as a complete opposition, a world not founded on mutual understanding between the two sides, but instead a world in which one of the sides is rated as “superflu,” nonessential. Fanon adds, these
two worlds “obéissent aux principes d’exclusion réciproque” (Les damnés 42). It is a system that dehumanizes the colonized. Fanon asserts that “Parfois ce manichéisme va jusqu’au bout de sa logique et déshumanise le colonisé” (Les damnés 45). In the last chapter of Les damnés de la terre, Fanon returns to discuss identity crisis to emphasize the connection between the individual and the nation. In her investigation of the relationship between subject, race and nation, Gwen Bergner considers Fanon’s return to the subject of psychoanalysis. Bergner cites Françoise Vergès, who notes that Fanon’s insistence on psychoanalysis hinges on the fact that he views the subject as an integral part of the nation: “individual alienation and political alienation are related; both are a product of social, political and cultural conditions that must be transformed” (Alessandrini 220). Although Fanon’s depiction of the colonial Manichaean world, particularly in Les damnés de la terre, is literal; it is also ideological. That is why Fanon’s theory of Manichaeism should be considered in the discussion of his pertinence in the era of globalization. What place does Fanon’s Manichaean idea have in the current global order?

We can find similarities as well as differences between colonial and contemporary constructions of a Manichaean world of the Self and the Other. Today colonial Manichaeism manifests itself in the form of a variety of discriminatory practices within the structures and processes of globalization that relate to economic, political and social issues within North-South relations. These include, in the first place, the direct and indirect institutionalized invasion of political, economic and cultural affairs of African countries and the imposition of values and practices perceived as superior to those of the Other. Secondly, although poverty in Africa is real, there is the negative sensationalized portrayal and representation of Africa by the Western media as a place of famine, poverty, disease and war. This defines the African continent as deficient without regard of its many resources. Such a perspective creates and magnifies the image of the “otherness” of the continent as seen through the eyes of the developed nations. Lastly, it is possible to draw parallels between the ambiguities in the colonial situation and contemporary globalization. For example, developed countries’ refusal to liberalize migration not only recalls Fanon’s idea of compartmentalization, but also contradicts liberalization of trade. The result is that those in rich countries with capital to invest are free to move it where they get maximum returns, yet skilled people from disadvantaged countries, who lack employment opportunities there and may be willing to work in developed countries, are left to stagnate with their skills, thus increasing the gap between the North and the South.
Contemporary manifestations of Manichaeism in Africa affect her political, economic and cultural interactions with the North. Fanon’s negation of Manichaeism and appeal for receptiveness to change, in order to embrace the Other in meaningful politics of resistance, are important messages both to the North and the South. He declares that: ”Nous estimons qu’il y a, du fait de la mise en présence des races blanches et noire, prise en masse d’un complexus psycho-existentiel. En l’analysant, nous visons à sa destruction” (Peau noire 9). Fanon challenges the world to follow the path to a new humanity in order to change the world. He writes: “Il s’agit pour le tiers monde de recommencer une histoire de l’homme” (Les damnés 304). Is liberation possible in today’s profit-driven capitalistic world?

The ambiguities of globalization

“Dual economies”

Fanon, in his discussion of colonial violence, stresses that racialization and oppression under both colonization and decolonization lead to compartmentalization of the world. These compartments, according to Fanon, are based on material wealth only accessible to the colonizer, thus alienating the native as he explains in this oft-cited passage:

L’originalité du contexte colonial, c’est que les réalités économiques, les inégalités, l’énorme différence des modes de vie, ne parviennent jamais à masquer les réalités humaines. Quand on aperçoit dans son immédiateté le contexte colonial, il est patent que ce qui morcelle le monde c’est d’abord le fait d’appartenir ou non à une telle espèce, à telle race. Aux colonies, l’infrastructure économique est également une superstructure. La cause est la conséquence: on est riche parce qu’on est blanc, on est blanc parce qu’on est riche. (Les damnés 43)

Fanon’s view may sound obsolete in the contemporary world; even so, there is still a sense in which some concerns that he raises continue to be valid today. That is why considering Fanon’s theory in the analysis of today’s unevenness between nations is important because rereading Fanon in the light of colonial racialization and oppression in the twenty-first century should lead us to focus on a more meaningful analysis of the realities of contemporary inequalities. Bhabha reiterates such a position in his foreword to The Wretched of the Earth, suggesting that Fanon’s “racial optic” is seminal in the critique of the configurations of contemporary globalization. He
argues that globalization is to blame for economic inequalities and poverty in disadvantaged societies and states that, “Dual economies create divided worlds” (xii), locating this dichotomy in Fanon’s Manichaean thinking. Fanon does not shy away from pointing out that the social institutions put in place by the colonial system favor the colonist. Thus, according to Fanon, social and economic injustices are inherent in colonialism. Therefore, to understand racial alienation, one must recognize economic and social realities. He states that racial alienation is a result of “un double processus” and asserts that “complexe d’infériorité” is a consequence of economic powerlessness (Peau noire 8). The colonial geographic configuration is thus determined by class and race, as Fanon suggests: “La ville du colon est une ville repue, paresseuse, son ventre est plein de bonnes choses à l’état permanent […] La ville du colonisé est une ville affamée, affamée de pain, de viande, de chaussures, de charbon, de lumière” (Les damnés 42-43).

Even though the Manichaean picture that Fanon paints in the quote above is metaphorical, it still depicts contemporary global inequalities. In this sense, Fanon’s theory of racialization of economic inequalities, though it explicitly describes the colonial situation, is not entirely confined to it. Today, the world’s rich and poor are growing farther apart. Based on his understanding of colonial system, Fanon sees through the colonist’s injustice and its lasting negative effects on colonized countries. He argues that Africa’s deprivation is a direct consequence of its encounter with Europe on colonial terms. He claims that "les nations européennes se vautrent dans l’opulence la plus ostentatoire. Cette opulence européenne est littéralement scandaleuse car… elle vient en droite ligne du sol et du sous-sol de ce monde sous-développé” (Les damnés 94). The fact that the colonist after declaring a colony independent takes away the wealth that he acquired through the effort of the colonized, according to Fanon, becomes the undoing and the curse of Africa as it “condamne à la régression” the young nation (Les damnés 95). No wonder Fanon’s prophetic writings about the future of Africa’s social and economic realities are fascinating. For instance, his description of the situation of Africa in the following passage is as it is today:

Aujourd’hui, l’indépendance nationale, la formation nationale des régions sous-développées revêtent des aspects totalement nouveaux. Dans ces régions, quelques réalisations spectaculaires exceptées, les différents pays présentent la même absence d’infrastructure. Les masses luttent contre la même misère, se
battent avec les mêmes gestes et dessinent avec leurs estomacs rapetissés ce que l'on a pu appeler la géographie de la faim. Monde sous-développé, monde de misère et inhumain. *(Les damnés 94)*

In his study of the racisms of globalization in international relations, Castles too views the contemporary binary paradigm as an extension of colonialism. He argues that the compartmentalization of the world is a pretext for the developed world to maintain its control over developing countries. He observes "the North-South divide is often a euphemism for the domination of the peoples of formerly colonized countries by Europe and North America – joined now by Japan and a small circle of ‘newly industrializing countries’” (163).

Fanon’s idea of defining decolonization as the demand for a “substitution totale” as a way to achieve national liberation may seem quite ideal, however, in my view, he is right to a certain extent as drastic changes in the world’s political, social and economic realms are necessary in order to address the issue of equitable distribution of resources. He declares: “Ce qui compte aujourd’hui, le problème qui barre l’horizon c’est la nécessité d’une redistribution des richesses. L’humanité, sous peine d’en être ébranlée, devra répondre à cette question” *(Les damnés 96)*. Perhaps time has come to reflect on Fanon’s appeal for redistribution of wealth.

**“Borderless world” or “gated communities”?**

The Northern countries’ growing economic and political power in the era of globalization has continued to attract immigrants from the South. While most of the exodus is towards North America, European countries attract North and West African immigrants mainly due to their shared history of colonialism. The impact of this movement has been two-fold. On the one hand, the host countries exploited the cheap, unskilled labor from willing and desperate immigrants who accept jobs that are not attractive to the citizens. On the other hand, the influx has resulted in competition for economic opportunities between the guests and the natives. This scenario has in turn led the natives to protect their resources. The result is the creation of a Manichaean dynamic, as the guests who form the minority are denied access to full membership in their new communities. Fanon observes that the dividing line in the colonial Manichaean world is “la frontière en est indiquée par les casernes et les postes de police” *(Les damnés 41)*. One could argue that Fanon’s Manichaeanism only applies to the twentieth century and not the twenty-first century. But in her work, *Frantz Fanon: A Portrait*, Cherki holds a different perspective,
informed by her life experience in France as well as her consideration of Fanon’s thoughts. She
discusses immigration and its Manichaean nature in France:

No one is more affected in France, today, by this necessity to understand violence,
in both its historical and contemporary manifestations, than the descendants of the
old colonies, … Although colonialism may no longer exist in its explicit and
historical form, the effects of its irreconcilable two-partite structure continue to
thrive under different guises. (208)

Cherki’s expression of the immigrants’ dilemma in France recalls Fanon’s effort to analyze in
order to transcend Manichaism. Slater too expresses the dilemma of potential migrants as he
cites the ambiguity of globalization processes:

In the US and Europe, the desire to defend borders and erect ‘fortresses’ sits
uneasily with support for the movement of commodities, open economies, the
abolition of economic protectionism, and deregulation. Hence, while on the one
hand the opening up of space to the free flow of capital is championed, the free
flow of labour is checked at the border. (Slater 170-171)

The ambiguity of globalization today is attributable to the fact that the centers of power no
longer focus on territory possession and occupation, but on territory protection. Loomba
describes the era of globalization in terms of “transnational networks, regional and international
flows and dissolution of geographic and cultural borders, paradigms which… suggest a radical
break with the narratives of colonization and anti-colonialism” (213). Although this view has had
its fair share of support and validity, some critics of globalization caution against it. For instance,
Slater describes globalization as a process that has continued to emphasize the divide between
developed and underdeveloped countries. He argues that “…while instantaneous electronic
movements of money and messages give the meaning to notions of a ‘borderless world’, in other
zones ‘fortified enclaves’ or ‘gated communities’ are erected to separate high-income spaces
from the social worlds of poverty, crime and disorder” (Slater 170, my emphasis). This view
calls to mind Fanon’s description of the colonial Manichaean world and his analysis of the
racialization of economic and social configurations, a trend that Fanon believes should come to
an end.

Many critics have cited contemporary examples of “gated communities” or “fortified
enclaves,” highlighting ways in which potential and non-citizen immigrants experience
exclusion. For example, Castles views globalization as an unjust process that simultaneously includes and excludes some of its members. He notes that:

[Global linkages (tend) to embrace every geographical area and every human group, while at the same time differentiating between these human groups: some groups become full members in the new global order while others are marginalized. This fundamental issue of inclusion and exclusion is a central aspect of all the other contemporary contradictions. (124)]

Immigrants sometimes encounter hostility in foreign countries as natives blame them for their economic woes. As a result, the governments of the developed countries have not only put in place measures to limit the entry of immigrants, but also adopted policies that deny existing immigrants certain rights. In the face of such an ambivalent relationship between the rich countries and more generally, the Third World countries, the two often find themselves, as a frustrated Fanon declares, “dans un état de tension permanente” in a world “qui rejette, mais dans le même temps c’est un monde qui fait envie” (Les damnés 54). The poor countries are confronted with a dilemma. Nothing illustrates this dilemma better than Fanon’s explicit language, as he writes: “Le colonisé est toujours sur le qui-vive car, déchiffrant difficilement les multiples signes du monde colonial, il ne sait jamais s’il a franchi ou non la limite” (Les damnés 54). Fanon understands that violence against humanity and contradiction is part and parcel of colonialism:

Disloquer le monde colonial ne signifie pas qu’après l’abolition des frontières on aménagera des voies de passage entre les deux zones. Détruire le monde colonial c’est ni plus ni moins abilir une zone, l’enfouir au plus profond du sol ou l’expulser du territoire. (Les damnés 44)

While expressing mistrust of the colonial system, Fanon anticipates the persistence of “gated communities” and insidious violence after the end of colonialism because he believes that the end of colonialism is not necessarily the end of violence. As Gibson puts it, “Just as the native is a product of colonialism . . . colonialism begins and continues through violence” (115). To liberate humanity, there is need to “détruire le monde colonial.” For Fanon, the colonial world is synonymous with the Manichaean world, “séparatiste or régionaliste,” or simply, it symbolizes violence (Les damnés 90). But its destruction, according to Fanon, calls for the “demolition” and “burial” of the colonist’s sector – to completely do away with its principles and doctrines in
order to form one sector occupied by truly liberated people. Fanon admits that it is a “travail colossal consiste à réintroduire l’homme dans le monde, l’homme total” (Les damnés 103). However, the “remains” of the colonial sector such as segregation of the rich and the poor are still observable in the globalization process.

**The Other as seen through the “Northern eye”**

Today, Western media portrayals of Third World countries are dominated by images of poverty. These stereotypes may be traced back to the history of Western civilization where some cultures were presented in negative ways. As such, this “other” world is shown as a poor, wretched and uncivilized. We see faces of hopeless, emaciated and malnourished women and children who gaze at the “other sector,” symbolized by the cameraman, with the “regard d’envie.” These images are mostly used to appeal for donations to help ‘the poor’ in various ways such as water and education projects, medical needs, and access to basic needs such as food and clothing. This depiction resonates with Fanon’s claim that “C’est le colon qui a fait et qui continue à faire le colonisé. Le colon tire sa vérité, c’est-à-dire ses biens, du système colonial” (Les damnés 40). These images and the discourse about poverty and famine in Africa contribute to the construction of the Other, separate from the Self, besides serving as a power discourse for the North to maintain its position as the center opposed to the deprived periphery. As Slater explains, “‘going global’ can exist side by side with a tendency … towards reassertion of an inner-directed gaze” (Slater 170). The reassertion of the Self engenders the discourse of “being” versus “not being” where the construction of the Other is arrived at by defining what they lack. Fanon describes this tendency in the colonial world:

La société colonisée n’est pas seulement décrite comme une société sans valeurs … L’indigène est déclaré imperméable à l’éthique, l’absence des valeurs, mais aussi négation des valeurs. Il est, osons l’avouer, l’ennemi des valeurs. En ce sens, il est mal absolu. Élément corrosif, détruisant tout ce qui l’approche, élément déformant, défigurant tout ce qui a trait à l’esthétique ou à la morale. (Les damnés 44)

The present day negative portrayal of African and other Third World countries as poor, and therefore, economically powerless, tends not only to emphasize the “exclusion réciproque” that Fanon criticizes, but also sustains the concept of “otherness” that was akin to the colonial setup.
We have seen philanthropists with good intentions using appropriate images to serve their interests. This shows that these images have gained normality in everyday life. The culture of donating to these countries has also created the problem of dependency that in turn accentuates the role of the North as a power center. Ironically, in the name of expressing humanity, this very gesture perpetuates a system that not only objectifies the Other, but also bolsters and sustains the rich countries’ power and control over the South. In his analysis of manifestations of imperial power in today’s societies, Slater sees the negation of the Other as a strategy used by imperial societies to maintain status quo:

a recipient society or culture … is represented as in need of progress, or order, or civilization, or improvement, or reform or democracy, thus denying the other society its right to make its own destiny … lack of respect for the other, being manifested in subordinating modes of representation, of negative essentializations, which erase or belittle the complexities, differences, heterogeneities and intrinsic values of the other culture or society. (Slater 53)

The negation of the Other’s essence therefore raises the need for his representation. On colonialism, Fanon writes: “Sur le plan de l’inconscient, le colonialisme ne cherchait pas à être perçu comme une mère douce … mais bien sous la forme d’une mère qui, sans cesse, empêche un enfant fondamentalement pervers de réussir son suicide … La mère coloniale défend l’enfant contre lui-même” (Les damnés 201). Fanon’s analogy means that the need for representation of the Other is born of the idea that he is incapable of representing himself. Hence, by emphasizing the “dernier” condition of the poor countries, the rich countries tend to reproduce the very Manichaean structure they intend to defeat. The Third World’s image is constructed in opposition to that of the developed world, creating the compartments that characterized colonialism.

Representation of developed countries is also an important subject in twenty-first century globalization. A closer look at Western representation of Third World countries, Africa in particular, helps situate some links between images of Africa in the North and the power and economic disparities that we see across the divide. African countries are still excluded from institutions that decide and shape their future, as the North continues to control decision-making agencies like the IMF and the World Bank. This reproduces domination structures similar to those observed in colonial times. The same representation is replayed by the formation of a
group like the G-8 that excludes the “other” countries but “speaks for” and “speaks about” them on matters concerning their economic, political and social issues. In an interview about the global economy, Sen is explicit about the biasness of these institutions, in addition to their racialized governance: “the World Bank and IMF governing structures – fixed by their rules and protocol – are very unequal in terms of the influence of different perspective.” Sen too sees the representation and exclusion of other countries from these seminal financial institutions through a “racial optic.” He says, “the president of the World Bank is always an American, while the president of the IMF can be an American or a European, but he or she is not going to be a Pakistani or an Ethiopian (irrespective of personal qualifications). The inequalities in the governing structure need to be reexamined, but it is unlikely that that will happen soon” (Shaikh 6-7).

Lastly, there is an apparent consensus among the Northern governing bodies in the world political and economic spheres that Africa needs democratic structures to help bolster its economic advancement programs. An attempt towards harmonization of global economies saw the imposition of new financial policies in developing countries by their developed counterparts such as the controversial “structural development program.” According to Slater, this move to “save” Africa from perpetual debts “was far more than an exercise in economics” (Slater 88). Indeed, it has been argued that the introduction and implementation of these programs has not only increased the inequalities between North and South, but also helped advanced the interests of the North in Africa.

What hope do these Other have in such a Manichaean system? For Fanon, the task of reconciliation is the responsibility of both the oppressed and the oppressor. Fanon’s dream of a new humanity and a new, equitable world may not be achievable, but there lies the hope of two worlds negotiating and embracing mutual understanding. Reading Fanon, Gibson cannot agree more with him. He suggests that:

To go beyond Manichaeism means to end the world of colonialism and racism and to inaugurate a new human reciprocity... Authentic termination of the colonial condition requires a new humanism and a new humanism requires total decolonization. Fanon turns away from liberal European humanism, which he considers hypocritical, but seriously attempts to create a more human and
fundamentally different future from the dehumanized and violent experience of colonial rule. (Gibson 181)

Hence, as Fanon concludes in *Peau noire, masques blancs*, his appeal for dignity and reconciliation between the two races is palpable:

Supériorité? Infériorité?
Pourquoi tout simplement ne pas essayer de toucher l’autre, de me révéler l’autre?
Ma liberté ne m’est-elle donc pas donnée pour édifier le monde du *Toi*?
À la fin de cet ouvrage, nous aimerions que l’on sente comme nous la dimension ouverte de toute conscience.
Mon ultime prière :
Ô mon corps, fais de moi toujours un homme qui interroge! (188)
CONCLUSION

Fanon’s time is more than half a century behind us. However, colonialism and globalization are two phenomena in two different eras, yet similar because in both systems some states emerge as more powerful than others, if not dictatorial, as has been demonstrated by this thesis. I have argued that economic violence that still lingers during globalization evokes Fanon’s engagement to promote a true spirit of a new world and his recognition of people’s power to bring about change in the world through reaching out to others on a level ground. Fanon expresses his desire: “Que jamais l’instrument ne domine l’homme … Qu’il me soit permis de découvrir et de vouloir l’homme, où il se trouve.” Fanon denounces any system that fosters domination of man. Thus, he rejects the culture of racial ranking of humans, for it denies man the opportunity to have “une authentique communication” with his fellow man as well as the freedom to express his humanity (Peau noire 187). For the same reason, Fanon disapproves the African bourgeoisie’s leadership after independence. He likens this kind of leadership to the colonist’s regime, for he believes that both regimes subject people to social injustices like domination and inequality. The main point is that Fanon challenges people to seek leaders who are not self-centered, but who have a vision of positively transforming their people and country. Similarly, Fanon frames the economic and social realities in the colonial setup in what he terms a Manichaean world. Fanon’s intention is not merely to describe that situation; his focus is to propose ways of ending the divisiveness. His horizon of possibilities is broad; he believes in a world beyond Manichaeism where reconciliation can be achieved in spite of the existing differences between people. He writes in the conclusion to Les damnés de la terre:

Non, nous ne voulons rattraper personne. Mais nous voulons marcher tout le temps, la nuit et le jour, en compagnie de l’homme, de tous les hommes. Il s’agit de ne pas étirer la caravane, car alors, chaque rang perçoit à peine celui qui le précède et les hommes qui ne se reconnaissent plus, se rencontrent de moins en moins, se parlent de moins en moins (304).

Fanon challenges the human race to embrace one another, care for each other and to come together in order to close the gap that renders human relations dysfunctional. Today, globalization is structuring countries in a “caravane” model. All the energy is directed toward maximization of profit, with little or no regard for those exploited in the process of amassing wealth. Consequently, some become rich by making others poor. This is a time when human
rights are recognized as paramount, but yet are violated by the very structures and institutions put in place to guard them. This is the time to reflect on Fanon’s words: “Il faut travailler, lutter à la même cadence que le peuple afin de préciser l’avenir, préparer le terrain où déjà se dressent des pousses vigoureuses” (Les damnés 221).
Works Cited


Chowdhry, Geeta and Sheil Nair. eds. *Power, Postcolonialism, and International Relations*.


